

City of Northampton, MA  
Transportation and Parking Commission

October 15, 2019

MEETING MINUTES

Submitted by: Beth A. Kaplowitt

1. Councilor Jim Nash called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. and announced that there would be audio/video recording of this meeting.

**Members present and absent/introductions:**

Member	Present	Time if arriving late or leaving early
Councilor Jim Nash, Chair	X	
Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra, Vice Chair	X	
Donna LaScaleia, DPW Director	Absent	
Jody Kasper, Chief of Police	X	
Wayne Feiden, Director of Planning and Sustainability	Absent	
David Pomerantz, Director of Central Services	X	
Debin Bruce, Citizen	X	
Gary Hartwell, Citizen	Absent	
Adam Novitt, Citizen	X	
Jami Albro-Fisher, Citizen	X	
Alan Verson, Planning Board	Absent	
Staff	Present	Time if arriving late or leaving early
Nanci Forrestall, Parking Enforcement	X	
Maggie Chan, Traffic Engineer	X	
Beth A. Willard, DPW Clerk	X	

2. **Brief promotion of Pace Car Program**

- Adam Novitt said that he signed up for the program a few years ago, pledging to drive the speed limit. It is hoped that people joining the program and sticking to the speed limit will prevent speeding by others. When you sign up, you get a sticker to ID your vehicle as a Pace car. Being visible is important – it telegraphs that keeping the City safe by not speeding is an important safety concern. You can sign up on the website or at the DPW, and pick up your sticker at the DPW.

3. **Public comment**

- Councilor Nash reminded everyone that they should keep their comments to a maximum of three minutes. If an item is not on today's Agenda, the TPC won't discuss it today. If

the item is on today's Agenda, the public can speak to it in the Public Comment segment of the Agenda, or during discussion of the actual Agenda item itself, or both.

- Fred Zimnoch of Pomeroy Terrace feels that parking issues on Phillips Place cause safety problems. He said that he is in favor of Agenda item 6.c) Ordinance Relative to Parking on Phillips Place;
- Mary Savariese of Prospect Avenue spoke about recent changes at the Amtrak parking lot on Pleasant Street. She would like the TPC to take no action to change the Code of the Parking & Transportation Ordinance at this time, to allow more time to analyze potential changes;
- Beth Notar of Franklin Street delivered a petition to the DPW which was signed by 30+ families regarding a request for traffic calming at the Franklin Street/Prospect Street intersection;
- Jara Malikan-Sirois and her daughter Maren said that the section of Florence Road that they live on is narrow, curvy and has no shoulder or sidewalk. They would like to see the City look at ways to reconfigure the road and add a sidewalk.

#### **4. Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

Motion:	Motion by:	Second:	Vote:
To approve the minutes from the September 17, 2019 meeting.	Debin Bruce	Jody Kasper	Yes, 7 No, 0 Abstain, 1

#### **5. Reports from departments and subcommittees/announcements/presentations**

- Department of Public Works (DPW) Updates – Traffic Engineer Maggie Chan:
  - Roadway Improvement Projects
    - a. The Burts Pit Road project is substantially complete. Palmer Paving will be working on site restoration;
    - b. On Chesterfield Road, Spring Street, Main Street (Leeds), and Cross Street, final paving is complete. Palmer Paving will work on driveways and loaming in the upcoming weeks;
    - c. Final paving on Glendale Road is complete. Warner Bros will be working on site restoration for both Glendale Road and Bridge Road;
  - Pavement Markings
    - a. Hi-Way Safety Systems is repairing speed hump and railroad markings this week.
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Update – Debin Bruce:
  - There was an update of projects and a discussion of signage at their last meeting. She will present a detailed report at the next TPC meeting.
- Councilor Nash said that the Walking School Bus project is going great. They currently have ten students on each of two routes. One starts at the Lumberyard and the other at Sheldon Field. They are looking to recruit more volunteer drivers. Anyone interested can sign up at the Bridge Street School website.
- Nanci Forrestall asked about an ETA for moving the bus stop in front of the Post Office. Traffic Engineer Chan replied that it is in the queue, but she is not aware of an ETA yet.
- Chief Kasper said that the bicyclist who was involved in a recent bike/pedestrian accident downtown at the corner of Masonic Street & Main Street was issued a citation after the accident.

## 6. Matters before the Commission

- a. Discussion of 19.136 An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 312 Vehicles and Traffic [to amend definitions of Parking Meter and Meter Violation]
- Councilor Nash gave an overview: This Ordinance will add language which will allow everyone to use the new parking app. He then read the Ordinance;
  - There was no discussion.

Motion:	Motion by:	Second:	Vote:
To send 19.136 An Ordinance To Amend Chapter 312 Vehicle and Traffic of the Code of Ordinances to City Council with a positive recommendation.	David Pomerantz	Gina-Louise Sciarra	Yes, 8 No, 0 Abstain, 0

- b. Discussion of 19.137 An Ordinance to Amend Chapter 312 Vehicles and Traffic [to delete handicapped parking space on Pleasant Street]
- This came from the Mayor's Office. The TPC is being asked to consider deleting a handicapped parking space on Pleasant Street;
  - After some discussion it was apparent that the commission members needed more information before they could make a decision;
  - Chief Kasper said that they could not make a decision until they know exactly where the parking space is and why they want to delete it;
  - Councilor Nash said that he would get someone to come in to explain the proposed Amendment at the next TPC meeting;

Motion:	Motion by:	Second:	Vote:
To table this item and continue discussion of 19.137 An Ordinance To Amend Chapter 312 Vehicles and Traffic of the Code of Ordinances at the next TPC meeting.	Gina-Louise Sciarra	Debin Bruce	Yes, 8 No, 0 Abstain, 0

- c. Discussion of Ordinance Relative to Parking on Phillips Place
- Councilor Nash said that the TPC had discussed this about a year ago. It has to do with the truck escape route on Phillips Place. As a tractor trailer truck reaches the easterly end of Phillips Place and wants to take a left onto Pomeroy Terrace, there are often cars legally parked on the right hand side of the street which prevent trucks from completely getting into the right hand lane to queue up. This can cause the trailer part of the truck to damage the utility pole as the trailer rolls up on the sidewalk and goes across the crosswalk;
  - Debin Bruce asked if this ordinance would solve the problem, and Councilor Nash said that he believed it would.

Motion:	Motion by:	Second:	Vote:
To send 19.XXX An Ordinance Relative to Parking on Phillips Place to City Council with a positive recommendation.	Debin Bruce	Jami Albro-Fisher	Yes, 8 No, 0 Abstain, 0

d. Discussion of Ordinance Relative to Parking on Walnut Street

- “No Parking” signs would go up at each end of the no parking space;
- Traffic Engineer Chan says that she has done measurements and that it makes sense to do this;
- Councilor Nash thanked the DPW for acting quickly on this;
- Adam Novitt said that a parking space is 18 feet long. He has previously looked into the possibility of putting in some motorcycle-only spaces. This could free up some parking spaces for just the cost of a can of paint;
- Councilor Sciarra suggested that the topic of motorcycle parking should be added to a future TPC agenda;
- Councilor Sciarra also noted that the TPC must vote on the actual Ordinance for now, which only includes the no parking space issue.

Motion:	Motion by:	Second:	Vote:
To send 19.XXX An Ordinance Relative to Parking on Walnut Street to City Council with a positive recommendation.	Debin Bruce	Adam Novitt	Yes, 8 No, 0 Abstain, 0

**7. New Business**

- Councilor Nash suggested that the topic of motorcycle parking spaces go on next month’s Agenda. He will have a discussion with Adam Novitt in the interim.
- Debin Bruce said that there is a “no idling” statute in the City in school zones, but doesn’t know if it applies elsewhere in the City. She mentioned that buses waiting at the Academy of Music bus stop sometimes sit idling for hours. She doesn’t know if they are running on alternative generators.

**8. Adjourned** at 4:53 p.m.

Motion	Motion by:	Second:	Vote:
Adjourn.	Gina-Louise Sciarra	Jami Albro-Fisher	Yes, 8 No, 0 Abstain, 0